

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, November 16, 1995

Published Since 1877

House offers D.C. students scholarships

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The U.S. House of Representatives approved, 241 to 177, a program that would provide scholarships for low-income children to attend public or private schools in the District of Columbia area.

The scholarship program was part of an overall school-reform package that was added to the D.C. budget bill (H.R. 2546). Scholarships of up to \$3,000 would be doled out by an independent board to students attending public, private or religious schools.

The Senate previously approved a spending bill for the district without the scholarship provision, and a conference com-

mittee must work out the differences in the two versions.

Supporters of the measure say because public schools have failed children, low-income families should have the opportunity to send their children to the school of their choice. Opponents say that such provisions are unconstitutional and the scholarships are no different from vouchers.

Rep. Steven Gunderson, R-Wis., said that his proposal does not take money from public schools and give it to private institutions.

"A voucher by any other name is still a voucher," countered Rep. William Clay, D-Mo., who added that the Gunderson amendment

would not bring school reform and may be unconstitutional.

Brent Walker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee, called the program "misguided."

"You don't improve the public schools by taking resources away and paying students to go to a religious school," Walker said. "Plus it's clearly unconstitutional. Calling it a 'scholarship' rather than a 'voucher' or 'grant' doesn't cure the constitutional problem."

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, noted that nearly half of the \$100 million set aside for school reform would finance the voucher program.

"The Constitution flatly bars Congress from taxing Americans to support religious instruction," Lynn said. "If this program becomes law, a legal challenge is certain" because government must not be allowed to "pass the collection plate to taxpayers."



Border Springs Church, Caledonia (Lowndes), will celebrate its 150th anniversary on Nov. 19. The day's activities will begin with Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. Worship services will follow at 10:30, with Michael T. Smith as guest speaker. Smith was ordained by Border Springs in 1977. He is the grandson of J.F. Sansing, pastor of Border Springs from 1927-39. A covered dish luncheon will be served in the fellowship hall at noon, followed by a gospel singing at 2 p.m. Bobby Cobb is pastor.



MBREA luncheon

The annual fall luncheon of the Mississippi Baptist Religious Educators Association was held Oct. 30 at Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, prior to the start of the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Convention. Preparing for the luncheon were Joe Armour (second from left), minister of education at First Church, Clinton, and Colonial Heights staffers Mark Bricker (left), minister of education; Joey Rodgers (second from right), single adult minister; and Jim Randall (right), student minister. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

SBC reports...

Seminary enrollment up at four schools

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP) — Student enrollment at four Southern Baptist Convention-owned seminaries increased this fall, but the two largest seminaries saw enrollment figures drop.

The seminaries officially compare fall-to-fall enrollment figures in late October based on the "non-duplicating headcount" of students enrolled in pre-baccalaureate programs, basic degree programs, and classes for academic credit.

Overall, total enrollment at the six SBC seminaries is down just slightly, from 9,190 students in fall 1994 to 9,177 students this fall.

Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., with 1,098 students enrolled this fall, posted an 18.7% gain over the previous fall enrollment of 925 students.

Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., with

494 students enrolled, rose 16.5% over the previous fall enrollment of 424 students.

Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., with 1,142 students enrolled, saw an 11.2% increase over the previous fall enrollment of 1,027 students.

New Orleans Seminary, with 1,796 students enrolled, improved by 6% over the previous fall of 1,692 students. The fall 1994 enrollment figure does not include second term registration.

The two largest SBC seminaries reported declines in enrollment this fall.

Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., with 1,621 students enrolled this fall, saw a 13% drop from the previous fall's count of 1,868 students.

Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, with 3,026 students enrolled, had a 7% drop in enrollment from the previous fall's 3,254 students.

Hanging in there

One of the leading film critics in the country is exhorting religious people not to give up on secular television and films. Michael Medved, chief film critic for the *New York Post* and co-host of "Sneak Previews" on public television, said he thinks people of good faith and conscience can work together toward a popular culture that matches Americans' innate decency. Medved has also written a number of books on the ever-declining quality of entertainment. "I do believe religious faith is one of the most pressing interests of the American people. America wants to come home. America wants to come back to decency," he said. Medved contended that too many talented, religious people have given up on television and films, rather than hanging in and putting to good use their influence within the industry. People of faith are needed to turn around the system, he pointed out. "The important thing is to let people see that it's possible to be modern, creative, and religious," he said.

Setting priorities

If you think Sam and Beverly in your office are hard to get along with, consider Cody Custer's workmates — Wild Toad, Wolfman, and Gunslinger. Their manners are atrocious, and they try to stomp and gore him at every opportunity. That's because Custer is one of the country's best bull riders, winning the world championship in 1992. He was even voted Most Popular Cowboy, but his life in the rodeo fast lane ended abruptly when a serious injury forced him to take six months off the circuit. "One of the first things I noticed was how much I enjoyed being in church every week. I saw how empty I had become after all these years of being on the road. I really am grateful God let this accident happen so I could get my priorities straight," he said. When Custer returned to bull riding this season, he decided to make it both his livelihood and his mission field. "The cowboy church services (at rodeos) are great at helping people find Christ, but I think there is a lot more we can do in the area of discipling and maturing people," he said.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Riverside and Quitman Associations, representing Tunica, Coahoma, and Quitman Counties in the Delta area of north-west Mississippi, vote to merge into North Delta Association with headquarters in Clarksdale.

20 years ago

First Church, West Point, establishes a new record in reaching the lost through its bus ministry, collecting 335 people in one Sunday for transport to the church — including one bus that was packed with 101 riders.

50 years ago

Mississippi College's varsity basketball players gleefully begin practice after hearing the news that their coach, Melvin Landrum, has been discharged from military service in the Pacific and is on his way home to Clinton.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The seminary next door

Mississippi Baptists do not own the New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) but we do have an above average interest in it. As early as 1912, P.I. Lipsey, editor of *The Baptist Record*, advocated the establishing of a theological institution in New Orleans. The Baptist Bible Institute opened in 1918. The school has made significant contributions to our state and we have invested much in the "school of providence and prayer." This symbiotic relationship has been good for all concerned.

President Landrum Leavell announced his retirement from the seminary in December 1994. Trustee Chairman Ed Johnson of Ocala, Fla., appointed a search committee and named Morris Lynn Anderson of Pigeon Forge, Tenn., as chairman. Earlier, Anderson had nominated Johnson as chairman of the trustees. Both have denied any collusion in this but "it just happened."

One member of the search committee was Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church, Bossier City, La. The committee first tried to get Jim Henry, Southern Baptist Convention president, to accept the posi-

tion of seminary president, but were unsuccessful.

Then the committee turned to Lowery. Lowery reportedly told his church he turned the committee down three times before agreeing to be nominated. Then trustee chairman Johnson called a meeting for Nov. 8-9 to elect Lowery.

Lowery has been very active in the fundamental/conservative movement, having served as vice-president of the SBC and president of the Pastor's Conference. He holds degrees from Samford University and Southwestern Seminary, and a doctoral degree from Luther Rice Seminary. Luther Rice Seminary was not accredited in 1978 when he received the degree but is now accredited by Transnational Association of Christian Schools.

Word of Lowery's nomination leaked out about 10 days prior to his election and telephone lines began humming.

Robert Magee, former chairman of NOBTS trustees, said Lowery's education is inadequate for the post of president. Curiously enough, Anderson said his committee had set no minimum academic quali-

cations. Most NOBTS faculty members have academic doctorates. Magee asked, "How can he (Lowery) effectively supervise those who have an ultimate degree when he does not have comparable preparation?"

Apparently quite a few friends of NOBTS urged the committee to reconsider. Lowery considered it and withdrew his name.

Anderson denied any denominational politics but the main thing was "just to get the will of God. This is not a political situation."

The special Nov. 8-9 trustee meeting was cancelled. Now Anderson and his committee will have to prove there are no denominational politics involved, a task which is becoming increasingly difficult.

We need New Orleans Seminary. It has a good faculty, with a golden opportunity to make NOBTS one of the leading theological schools in the nation. We do not need politics, but prayer — no lowering of the academic standards, but a continuation of the high academic discipline that has marked the school for 77 years.

I'M THINKING OF WRITING OUR EDITOR EITHER TO THANK HIM FOR THAT ARTICLE ON MISSIONS, OR TO APPLAUD HIS EDITORIAL ON RACE RELATIONS, OR TO CRITICIZE HOW HE SPELLED OUR CHURCH'S NAME.

"THAT'S IT! LET'S STRAIGHTEN HIM OUT!"



THE FRAGMENTS

Convention highlights

What did you like best about our recent convention? The venue was excellent. It was in the central part of the state and First Church, Jackson, does a great job with its spacious facilities. Mississippi Baptists will owe a debt of gratitude to this congregation for years to come.

The fellowship was unsurpassed. I met people I had baptized in the 1950s and '60s. Choice lay persons added a great flavor to every meeting. Mix all of this with good singing such as "The Midnight Cry" by the choir of First Church, McComb, or One Voice singing "Until The Day," or the Singing Churchmen who can make a four-star anthem out of "Brighten the Corner Where You Are."

Great preaching is always in order. The new convention president, Jimmy Porter, said, "stay committed, finish well." Steve Bennett of Southaven's Colonial Hills declared, "You can't get it done with a dog and pony show; it takes the power of God."

Also, Mose Dangerfield vehemently denied using the same cake (which reportedly was used last year) for the 100th year celebration of the BYPU and its allied organizations. I don't know about the cake, but the testimonies were tremendous. Even Yogi Berra was quoted: "You gotta be careful if you don't know where you're going — you may get there." I believe Mississippi Baptists know where they are going. — GH

introduced Senate Bill 978, the "Charitable Giving Protection Act of 1995." The Act clarifies that the securities laws do not apply to gift management as the plaintiff contends, and that the antitrust laws do not apply to charitable gift annuities.

Senator Hutchison said if the lawsuit in Wichita Falls is successful, it could "financially disable thousands of charities, including hospitals, relief organizations, arts groups, museums, universities, and every religious denomination in the country. One of the plain-

tiff's lawyers in this case has boasted that this is a 'billion-dollar lawsuit' because it will extract huge sums of money from our nation's noblest institutions — and earn him a big contingency fee."

You can help by immediately contacting your U.S. Senators and Representatives (see sidebar) and urging their support of S. 978, the "Charitable Giving Protection Act of 1995." The Senate is scheduled to vote on this bill on or around Nov. 28.

Brown is editor, Oklahoma's BAPTIST MESSENGER.

Guest Opinion...

Lawsuit threatens charities; help asked

By Glenn A. Brown

The fallout from a federal lawsuit filed in Wichita Falls, Texas, could result in devastating damage to the nation's charities unless immediate support can be generated for passage of a bill now under consideration by members of Congress. Here is the story in a nutshell:

A 90-year-old North Texas woman chose to donate her \$800,000 estate to Lutheran charities through a charitable gift annuity. She died, leaving no lineal heirs. The woman's grand-niece, dissatisfied with her great aunt's disposition of her estate, filed a lawsuit to gain a portion of the inheritance.

A charitable gift annuity is an arrangement whereby a donor gives a sum of money to a charity. The charity invests the money, and the premium on the annuity goes to the charity, for which the donor receives a tax-deduction. In addition, the donor receives payments for the remainder of his/her life. If money is left in the annuity at the donor's death, it too goes to the charity.

Gift annuities have been around for more than 100 years and have been widely used without problems by hundreds

of charitable, non-profit groups.

Among other issues, the lawsuit claims that the charitable gift annuity violated federal antitrust laws in using rates suggested by the American Council on Gift Annuities. Member groups voluntarily agree to certain rates so charities are not

in competition with each other, such as the Baptists with the Lutherans, etc. The suit also claims the charitable gift annuity violates federal securities laws.

The lawsuit now has 30 defendants and the plaintiff seeks to have this case certified as a class action suit to include organizations representing some 2,000 charities. Among the current defendants are numerous religious, educational, and charitable organizations, including the Texas Baptist Foundation, the Southern Baptist Convention, the American Bible Society, and American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. Certification of the lawsuit as a class action could make a target of practically every charity in the country simply because it has issued or managed charitable gift annuities.

The upshot is that unless some remedy is found soon, charities across the nation will be inundated with expensive litigation for years to come.

In an effort to resolve the matter expeditiously, and to save large sums on legal fees, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) and Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) have

Senators at:
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Thad Cochran
phone: (202) 224-5054 / FAX: (202) 224-9450

Trent Lott
phone: (202) 224-6253 / FAX: (202) 224-2262

Representatives at:
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Roger Wicker (Dist. 1)
phone: (202) 225-4306 / FAX: (202) 225-3549

Bennie Thompson (Dist. 2)
phone: (202) 225-5876 / FAX: (202) 225-5898

G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery (Dist. 3)
phone: (202) 225-5031 / FAX: (202) 225-3375

Mike Parker (Dist. 4)
phone: (202) 225-5865 / FAX: (202) 225-5886

Gene Taylor (Dist. 5)
(202) 225-5772 / FAX: (202) 225-7074

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Liquor votes may herald turnaround in public attitude

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Liquor proponents were slammed in the only two Mississippi counties to hold referenda on election day Nov. 7, and Baptists on the front lines of those alcohol wars believe public opinion may be moving away from liberalizing liquor laws any further.

Voters in Pearl River County — almost a suburb of sprawling New Orleans — turned back legalized liquor for the third time in 16 years. More than 58% of the unofficial vote total was against the proposal.

In Rankin County, just outside the capital city of Jackson in one of the most prosperous areas of the state, 59% of voters opposed legalized liquor.

In both counties, the margin of victory grew larger for anti-liquor forces compared to referenda in

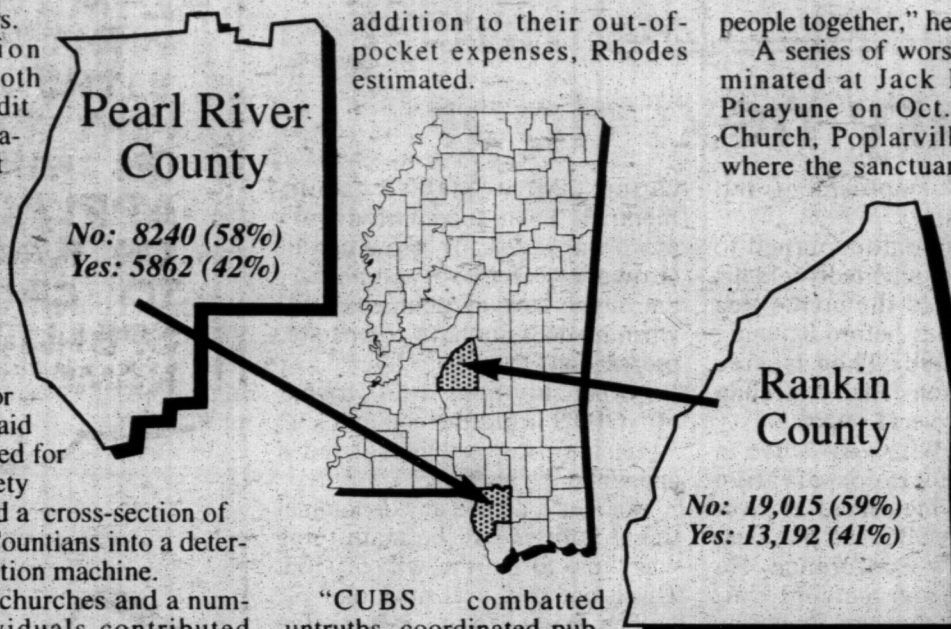
previous years.

Opposition leaders in both counties credit interdenominational effort and strong organization for the victories.

Ken Rhodes, Pearl River Association's director of missions, said Citizens United for a Better Society (CUBS) fused a cross-section of Pearl River Countians into a determined opposition machine.

About 25 churches and a number of individuals contributed more than \$8,000 to CUBS, in

addition to their out-of-pocket expenses, Rhodes estimated.



"CUBS combatted untruths, coordinated publicity, raised money, and brought

people together," he said.

A series of worship rallies culminated at Jack Reed Park in Picayune on Oct. 29 and First Church, Poplarville, on Nov. 5, where the sanctuary was packed

with over 400 people by 5 p.m.

"Churches went together. Testimonies were given. Those rallies were the high points," Rhodes reported.

Opponents wrote letters to the editors of local newspapers and distributed 4,500 posters across the county, in addition to parking wrecked autos at major intersections with attached warnings about drunken driving.

CUBS also worked hard to ensure high voter turnout, despite foul weather as polls opened, Rhodes said.

Allen Stephens, director of missions for Rankin Association, said he was somewhat surprised at the margin of victory in his county.

"A lot of new people are coming in to Rankin County. We were concerned about losing ground," he said, referring to the last liquor referendum that was successfully defeated in 1992.

The final vote spread was larg-

er this time than 1992, leading Stephens to presume that the new Rankin Countians have the same sense of family values already prevalent in the community.

"That's what attracts them," he said.

No-Al, a long-standing interdenominational group with strong Baptist leadership, was revived to fight the newest liquor threat, Stephens said.

"No-Al is not a bunch of religious fanatics. It has broad-based support in Rankin County," he pointed out.

No-Al raised about \$23,000 to saturate the county with anti-alcohol messages, Stephens said.

While liquor proponents were complaining that Rankin County suffers economically without liquor, real-estate developers were announcing a multi-million dollar commercial complex at the Interstate 20-Pearson Road exchange.

The development will include a Cracker Barrel restaurant and a four-story Budgetel motel, Stephens said.

"The developers said they were going to build it, with or without liquor. It didn't hurt that they announced the project the day after the liquor petition was filed," he said.

Both Rhodes and Stephens are relieved that their counties won't be flowing with legalized liquor any time soon, but they promise vigilance against future threats.

"We were ready, and we'll be ready again. Mark that down," Stephens said.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, November 16, 1995

Published Since 1877

Partnerships spotlighted at '95 convention meeting

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Mississippi Baptist partnership missions projects were a prominent part of the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Convention Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at First Church, Jackson.

Cliff Davis (photo #1, left), interim state missions director for the Alaska Baptist Convention, presents gifts of appreciation for the three-year Mississippi/Alaska partnership that will close on Dec. 31. Bill Hardy, partnership missions' coordinator for the Missis-

issippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), accepts the gifts on behalf of the state's Baptists.

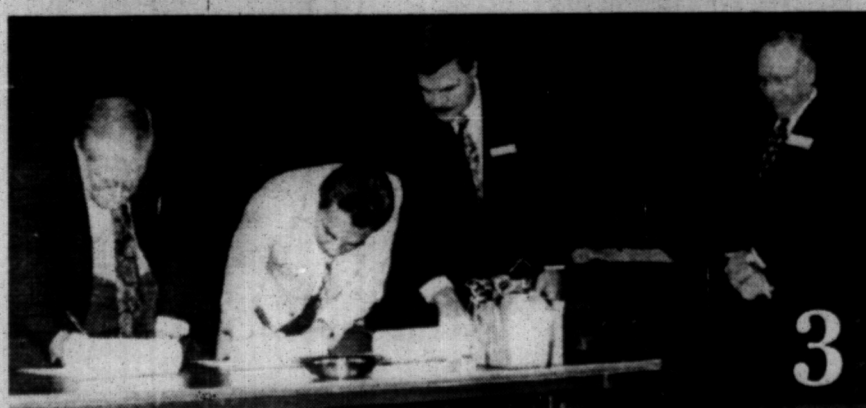
David Bungh (photo #2, left), executive director-treasurer of the Colorado Baptist General Convention, seals the new Mississippi/Colorado partnership pact with Rex Yancey (center), outgoing president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and Bill Causey, MBCB executive director-treasurer. The three-year Mississippi/Col-

orado partnership will begin on Jan. 1, 1996.

Causey also witnessed the formal signing of Mississippi Baptists' three-year international partnership with Venezuela (photo #3), also slated to begin Jan. 1, 1996. Tom Warrington (left), a Mississippi native serving in the Volunteers in Missions Department of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) in Richmond, Va., signed the document, along with Hipolito Avila (second from left), president of the Venezuela Baptist Convention. Dickie Nelson (second from right), president of FMB's Venezuela Baptist Mission in Caracas, served as interpreter for Avila.

A group of Mississippi associational directors of missions (photo #4) returned Nov. 13 from a pre-partnership trip to Venezuela, where they conducted evangelistic activities. Directors of missions and their associations include (from left) Bill Duncan, Golden Triangle Missions; Bobby Waggoner, Attala; Don Stanfill, Marshall/Lafayette; Walter Ballard, Panola; Joe Abel, Leake; Eddie Hamilton, Metro; Don Wilson, MBCB director of missions extension and association administration; and Bill Smith, Lee.

For information on partnership missions, contact Bill Hardy at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Okla. speaker urges moderates to look beyond past SBC battles

NORMAN, Okla. (ABP) — Some moderates have become obsessed with losing the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) because they idolized it, speaker Ken Chafin told a Nov. 3-4 gathering in Norman, Okla.

After a decade of political infighting, moderates should now turn to channeling their energies in positive ways, said Chafin, a retired seminary professor and pastor from Louisville, Ky. He spoke to the general assembly of the Cooperating Baptist Fellowship (affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the national organization of moderate Baptists) of Oklahoma.

Chafin said moderates should not forget their past but should refuse "to be held captive by our past." He urged moderates "not to be trapped in yesterdays, but to somehow find Christ and a new future."

In business of the meeting at First Church in Norman, the Okla-

homa Fellowship presented its first Baptist Heritage Award to the late Joe Ingram. Ingram was executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma from 1971-86.

The group also elected Bill Johnson, pastor of Northwest Church in Ardmore, as moderator.

Theologian Bill Hendricks said part of the Baptist debate over the years has been over freedom to determine the nature of truth.

Truth is more than personal experience and ponderous doctrine, said Hendricks, who soon will start a Baptist studies program at Texas Christian University's Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth.

Kentucky Baptist editor Marv Knox emphasized the need for truth-telling in the denominational press.

"Truth — accurate information... — fuels the engine of democracy," Knox said. "In a democratic denomination, integrity

depends on truth-telling."

Knox said over the years, Southern Baptist leaders generally allowed their journalists to report freely on denominational affairs. However, "with few exceptions, the Southern Baptist news operation was a company store," he said. "And when politics overtook the company and politicians tended the store, freedom and truth-telling were taken off the shelf."



Members of the worship team of the Temple Church, Hattiesburg, choir performed Oct. 30 at the Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference, held prior to the start of the annual Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting. Temple's pastor, Dean Register, served as the 1995 president of the pastor's conference. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Grandson of SBC leader Jimmy Allen dies Nov. 10

DALLAS (ABP) — Matthew Allen, grandson of former Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leader Jimmy Allen, died Nov. 10 after a lifelong battle with AIDS. He was 13.

Jimmy Allen, who formerly led the SBC's Radio and Television Commission and was SBC president in 1978-79, detailed his family's struggle with AIDS in a new book, **Burden of a Secret: A Story of Truth and Mercy in the Face of AIDS**.

Matt contracted the HIV virus that causes AIDS from a tainted blood transfusion given to his mother hours before his birth. Before Matt's mother Lydia discovered she had the virus, she had

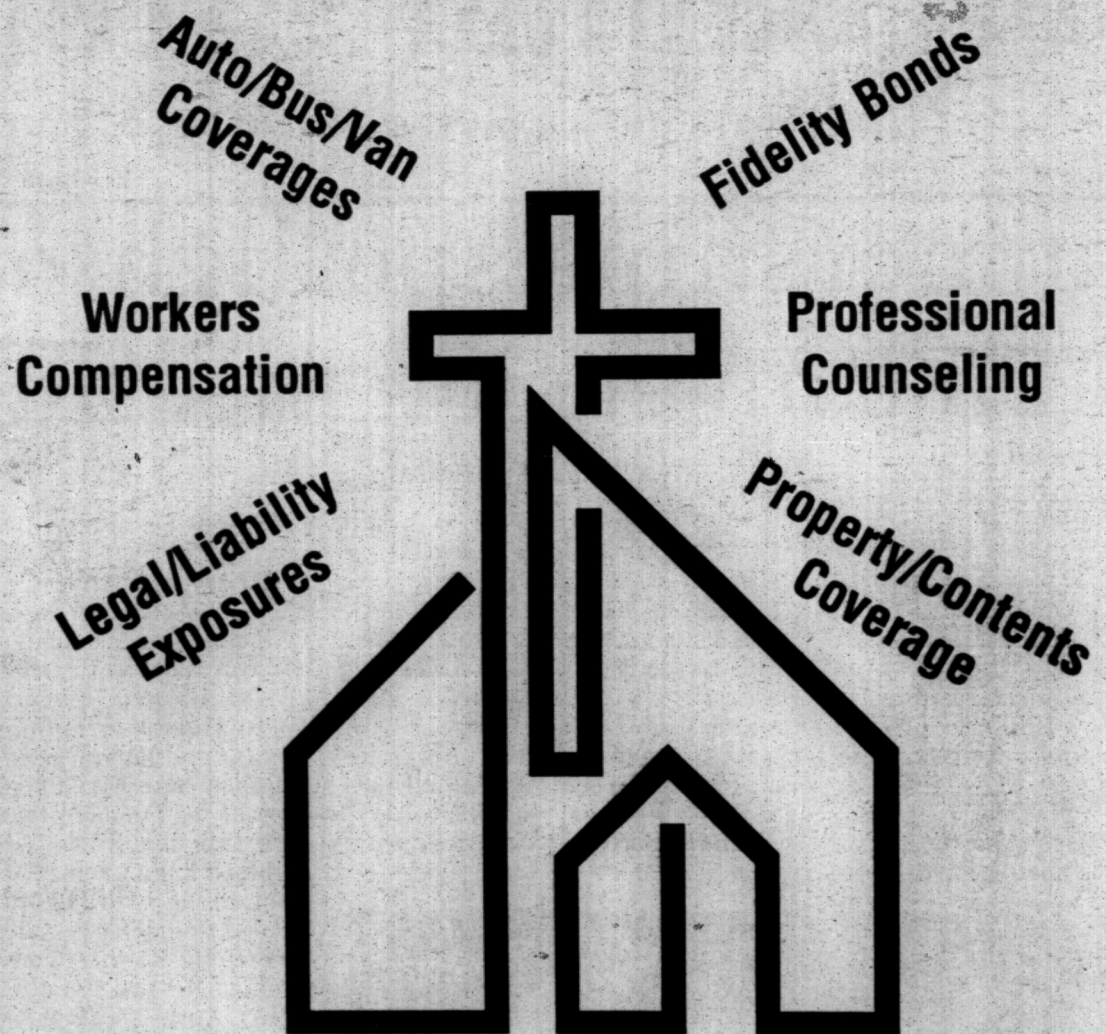
another son Bryan, who died in infancy in 1986. Lydia died from AIDS in 1992.

Matt's father Scott wasn't infected, but was fired as minister of education at First Christian Church in Colorado Springs, Colo., when he told his pastor about his family. Matt was kicked out of the church's day-care center. The family was sent looking for a new church.

They moved to Dallas, where a string of churches refused to accept Matt in their Sunday Schools because of fear and prejudice about AIDS.

Jimmy Allen said he wrote the book because a decade after his family's crisis began, churches are still shunning people with AIDS.

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Foundation matters

Bob Ross (left), member of First Church, Columbus, and a Mississippi Baptist Foundation trustee, talks with Jane Newell (center), administrative assistant in the Foundation office, and Frances Brister, member of Pine Lake Church, Rankin Association, at the Foundation display during the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Convention. The annual session was held Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at First Church, Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

HOUSE TOPS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

November 16, 1995

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

Mississippi Baptist YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

Mississippi College
Clinton, Miss.
December 28-29, 1995

East to West in concert
Thursday, Dec. 28, 7:45 p.m.

East to West was nominated for "New Artist of the Year," American Christian Music Awards. They are a duo with a name as old as the Psalms and a sound that's strictly state-of-the-art pop. Jay DeMarcus and Neal Coomer deliver strong Christ-centered messages put to irresistibly hooky pop music.

Bill Jones, speaker, serves as executive director of Crossover Communications International, a missions organization based in Columbia, S.C. He ministers to thousands of people each year through his speaking and more than a dozen books.

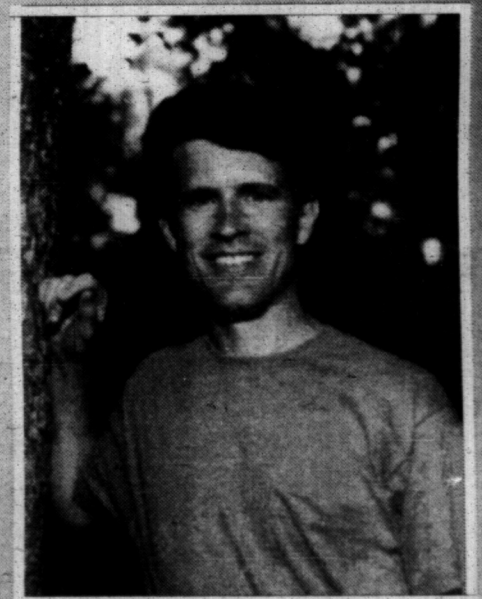
Images Creative Group is a trio of three uniquely diverse individuals who combine comedy, drama, and music to portray Biblical principles with a contemporary twist. *Images* will also be leading in worship music.



East to West



Images Creative Group



Bill Jones

Still in LOVE

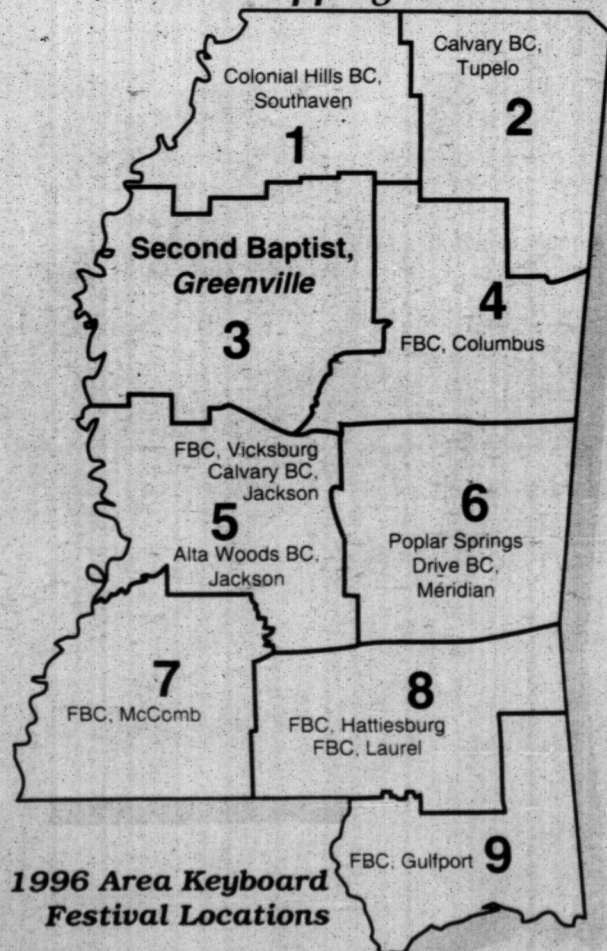
Let's pray this day... December 1-14

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

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| for Southern Baptists' involvement with prayer and financial support through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering | for retired missionaries living and ministering in Mississippi | for Betty Hart, Mississippi missionary, as she works with new ministry in a fishing village in Chile | for church-wide participation in Week of Prayer | for leaders of the Foreign Mission Board | for college students who are preparing for first semester examinations | for Christmas music programs in Mississippi Baptist churches |
| for children who hear the story of Jesus for the first time this year | for Mississippi partnerships with Honduras, Venezuela and Colorado | for pastors who continue to minister in spite of personal difficulties | for Mississippi missionaries at work around the world | for safe travel of college students going home for the holidays | | |
| | | | | | | |

OOPS!! Please note the area 3 Keyboard Festival will be held at Second Baptist Church, Greenville, 1407 East Reed Road, Saturday, January 27, 1996, 9:30 a.m. - noon.

Start Mapping Your Route!



1996 CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCES

"Employment-Related Legal Issues"

- ◆ **Purpose:** To deal with issues concerning church employment practices - risks, regulations, and guidelines. To offer information on financial planning and investments.
- ◆ **Target Audience:** Church Business Administrators, Church Staff, Personnel Committee Members, Financial Committee Members.
- ◆ **Finances:** There is no charge for the conference. (You will be on your own for meals.)
- ◆ **Keynote Speakers:** Julie Bloss, legal counsel for the Annuity Board of SBC, Dallas; Hal Fisher, director, Mississippi Baptist Foundation, Jackson



Julie Bloss

JANUARY 23, 1996
First Baptist Church, Grenada
741 Line Street

JANUARY 24, 1996
First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg
510 W. Pine Street

JANUARY 25, 1996
Broadmoor Baptist Church
787 E. Northside Drive, Jackson



Hal Fisher

For further information, contact: Julius Thompson, 800-748-1651, (in Jackson) 968-3800.

HOUSE TOPS

Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth
1996
Choir & band

• Auditions •

FEBRUARY

- 1 FBC, Biloxi — 5-8 pm
- 2 Central BC, McComb — 5-8 pm
- 3 University BC, Hattiesburg — 9 am-2 pm
- 13 Baptist Building, Jackson — 5-8 pm
- 22 FBC, Greenwood — 5-8 pm
- 26 North Oxford BC, Oxford — 5-8 pm
- 27 Harrisburg BC, Tupelo — 5-8 pm
- 29 Emmanuel BC, Columbus — 5-8 pm

MARCH

- 2 Baptist Building, Jackson — 9 am-2 pm
(instrumental audition on this date, also)

Auditions will include:

- A solo (no tapes)
- Sightreading
- Tonal Memory
- Singing their voice part from a hymn

Audition Fee: \$3.00 per person

Registration Deadline: One week prior to audition

Contact the Church Music Department for further details on these auditions.



SUIT PROJECT

What is it?

For over 31 years Baptists in Mississippi have enjoyed sending new suits to the pastors in new work areas. This is our way of letting the pastors in these areas of Southern Baptist life know that we care about and support them in their work.

Mississippi Baptists say

"Merry Christmas"

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Alaska, Iowa, and Minnesota-Wisconsin

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Ballgame: 5:00 p.m.

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(includes program, limited insurance, supper, and the game)

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FEBRUARY 17, 1996

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Ballgame: 5:45 p.m.

Cost: \$7.50 per person

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If you wish to include a tract or scripture portion, AIM '96 recommends the use of the official Olympics tract, "Interactive Pocket Guide '96," which may be ordered from the Home Mission Board, 1-800-634-2462. This is a priced item. You are not required to include a tract; on-site volunteers will be available for distributing this guide or New Testaments, if they are not in the hospitality bags.

Collected items are to be placed in special imprinted drawstring bags available from Mississippi WMU for 10 cents each. Send 10 cents per bag (one check made payable to Mississippi WMU, designated '96 Hospitality Bags). Orders, along with payment, are being accepted now. The bags should arrive around January 1.

Begin collecting items and when your bags arrive, fill them with five of the eight items you have collected. If you have a volunteer group going to Athens, please take the bags with you. If you are not going, mail the filled bags to: WMU, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201, Attn: Jan Cossitt. The bags will be transported to Athens in July.

HOUSE TOPS

Just for the Record

Roger Waller is available for a full-time pastorate. He prefers a small church of about 35-40 members. Waller can be contacted at Rt. 3, Box 20, Forest, MS 39074.

James C. Madison of Cochran, Ga., has been honored by his children and his churches after 51 years in the ministry. He pastored 17 churches during his ministry, including Glenfield Church, New Albany; Cross Roads Church, Pelahatchie; and Mountain Creek Church near Flo-

rence. After he retired, he served in 13 interim pastorates. His wife of 61 years, Frances passed away in October at age 82.

Mississippi College has named **Benjamin M. McKibbens** of Harlingen, Texas, **W. Rory Lee** of Clinton, and **Charles R. Cannon** of Brandon to its Order of the Golden Arrow for 1995. The award honors graduates of Mississippi College who have excelled in their professions while displaying loyalty to and support of the college.

Homecomings

Old Vicksburg Road (formerly Cherry Park), Clinton: Nov. 19; 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Obadiah and the Gospel Messengers, guest quartets; Benton Preston, pastor.

Fairview, Indianola: Nov. 19; 122nd anniversary; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship,

10:55; covered dish dinner in Redding Hall; Bob Trotter, pastor, message; George Lipe, music.

Jericho, Baldwin: 115th anniversary; Nov. 19; beginning 10:50 a.m.; Jeff Gann, guest speaker; lunch following service; Master's mission offering will be taken; Neil Davis, pastor.

Families in Central Mississippi have an opportunity to hear a new language, taste another culture, and make lifelong friends by hosting a Youth For Understanding (YFU) international exchange student. Patsy Culpepper, local YFU volunteer, seeks a family to host Carolina, a teenager from Argentina. She will arrive in January to spend about six months with her host family. Call Patsy Culpepper at (601) 693-6757 or the YFU Regional Office at (800) 872-0200.

Petal-Harvey Church, Petal: has oversubscribed to its budget for the ninth consecutive year. The 1996 budget called for \$487,664 and 416 members turned in commitment cards that pledged \$490,932. Fourteen percent of the budget will go to the Cooperative Program. Ione Bond is director of the Forward Program of Church Finance. Gerald P. Buckley is pastor.

The First Southern Baptist Church, Hawthorne, Nev., is accepting resumes for full-time staff position of youth ministry and mission pastor. Respond in writing to ATT: Gary Wallis, chairman, Search Committee, First Southern Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1364, Hawthorne, NV 89415.

West Gulfport Church, Gulf Coast Association, held a Spiritual Renewal Weekend on Oct. 14. Evangelist Ira C. Salyers, Old Ship of Zion Ministries, Hattiesburg, was guest speaker. The music was led by Frances Buckley, music director, West Gulfport Church. Grady J. Poss is pastor.

Magnolia Church, Laurel, is planning a homecoming-spring revival in March 1996. The church is in search of names and addresses of former members. The

address of the church is 1040 Wansley Rd., Laurel, MS 39440.

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Anyone considering becoming a US-2 home missionary in 1996 must request an application by Friday, Nov. 17, to be considered. The US-2 program assigns college graduates in their 20s to two-year home missions assignments for evangelism, church starting, and ministry. The Home Mission Board has 25 vacant US-2 positions for service starting Aug. 15, 1996. Applications are due back to the board by Dec. 1. Group interviews will be in Atlanta Feb. 2-4. More information is available from the Home Mission Board at 1-800-HMB-VOLS.

The Mississippi College Chamber Choir, which performed in June at Carnegie Hall in New York, has been singled out for yet another honor — to sing before some of the nation's finest choral directors. The group will be performing on Feb. 29, 1996, at the Southern Division Convention of the American Choral Directors Association in Norfolk, Va., one of only two college choirs from Mississippi chosen for the honor from more than 60 choirs in an eight-state region.

Revival Dates

Eureka (Rankin): Nov. 19-22; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; James E. Pugh, Century, Fla., evangelist; A.J. Stewart, pastor.

Calvary, New Augusta: Nov. 19-22; Sunday, 11 a.m. worship, covered dish dinner on the grounds, no night service; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bill Nobles, evangelist; Edward Jordan, music; Clay Ingram, pastor.



The Mississippi College Opera Workshop, including members (from left) Beth Jones, Jennifer Greenhaw, and Carla Parker, will present a recital of opera scenes on Nov. 17 at 8:15 p.m. in Aven Fine Arts Auditorium on campus. Tickets (students, \$2; adults, \$5) are available from the Music Department and at the door. The Opera Workshop is directed by Chandler Thompson, assistant professor of music. For more information, call the Music Department at (601) 925-3230.

J.A. Bryant, former pastor, dies at 80

James Arlis Bryant, 80, died of heart failure Nov. 7 at Hillcrest Hospital in Calhoun City.

Funeral services were held Nov. 9 at Parker Memorial Funeral Home Chapel. Burial followed in the cemetery of Rocky Mount Church, where Bryant was a member.

The retired Baptist minister pastored churches in Mississippi and Louisiana for 46 years. He was a graduate of Clarke College and Mississippi College.

He is survived by his wife Birtis of Bruce; daughter Mary Burt of Newton; sons A.B. of Fayetteville, N.C., Lowell of Canton, James of Dallas, and Paul of Bells, Tenn.; brothers Selma of Bruce, Victor of Calhoun City, and Hollis of Pittsboro; sisters Corinne Crocker of Bruce, Marie Bloodworth of Scobey, and Garneita Murphee of Coldwater; 11 grandchildren; and four great grandchildren.

Bryant was preceded in death by a son and a brother.



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Uniform Help wanted



By Andy Brasher
Acts 15, 16

It seems like yesterday that I was searching the "help wanted" ads in the local Memphis paper seeking gainful employment. Like many college graduates, I had no experience, no specialized training, didn't have a clue what I really wanted to do, but was more than willing to work for my keep.

My major had been political science and socio-economics. To put it simply, I could do a little of anything, but nothing in particular. I needed help and someone to want me — bad!

My father, being much wiser than I, suggested that I should seek help instead of waiting for it. In a few weeks, I had landed the perfect job. That experience taught me to first seek, and then God would provide. That has been my philosophy ever since.

In the service of Christ, this philosophy seems to be true as well. For those who seek him, God will help you find a position of service. The proclamation of the gospel needs a lot of help. There are positions available, but first you must seek him. Finally, God can use anyone. There are no employment prerequisites for his service, just the willingness to work.

In this week's lesson, Paul preaches "help wanted."

Paul's split with Barnabas (15:36-41). Christians are not immune to differences. These differences can even cause friends to part company, especially when it concerns personnel considerations.

This was definitely the case with the separation of Paul and Barnabas over their sidekick John Mark. Since John Mark had deserted them on their last journey, Paul refused to employ his services again.

Barnabas contested Paul's stubbornness, and took John Mark with him. Subsequently, Paul chose Silas, a leader in the Antioch church. Even though the two had parted company, the gospel message was enriched by the two-prong missionary attack instead of the previous one.

God turned something potentially ugly into a situation that produced the possibility of blessings to those who were lost.

Timothy added to the team (16:1-5). In the city of Lystra, province of Galatia, Paul asked young Timothy to respond to his "help wanted." Timothy was raised as a Jew by his mother and grandmother, but was half Greek on his father's side.

His reputation was excellent throughout the area, and evidently Timothy was seeking a position of service in the faith and responded to Paul's request for help. After his circumcision, Timothy accompanied Paul and Silas on their journey.

Paul's vision (16:6-10). In Troas, Paul had a vision or a dream of a man residing in Macedonia, who was calling and begging him to come and preach the gospel to them. Having been silenced by the Spirit in Asia, Paul recognized the calling of the Spirit to preach the gospel to the Macedonians.

Lydia's conversion (16:15). In Philippi, Paul went out on the Sabbath, outside the city by the water's edge, and preached the gospel to a number of women who had gathered there. One of the women, Lydia, a wealthy trader of purple linen, believed in Paul's message, responded to the "help wanted," and invited the missionaries into her home. The first church in Europe was established.

Exorcism of slave girl and jailer's conversion (16:16-34). At Philippi, Paul exorcised a demon out of a slave girl. The demon within her allowed her to tell fortunes. She was used by her owners for profit. After the demon had been repudiated, the owners of the slave girl brought Paul and Silas before the authorities on charges of exciting a crowd and preaching customs unlawful for Romans. Paul and Barnabas were stripped, beaten, and thrown into prison.

While incarcerated, their faith was never dampened. Their allegiance to the faith and the events surrounding an earthquake enticed the Philippian jailer and later his family to believe and respond to the Lord's "help wanted" invitation.

Brasher is pastor of Como Church, Como.

Bible Book Study leads to repentance



By Larry McDonald
Nehemiah 8, 9, 10

A small boy dialed "0" and asked the operator to call a number for him. He didn't speak clearly, so she couldn't understand him. After repeating it four times, he blurted out, "You operators are dumb," and slammed down the receiver.

Hearing this, his mother was shocked. She called the operator and made the boy apologize. Later, when his mother left the house, the lad got on the phone again.

"Is this the same operator I talked to a little while ago?"

"Yes," came the reply.

"Well," said the boy, "I still think you're dumb!"

That boy's apology reminds me of a missing element in the lives of many Christians — genuine repentance. Facing up to sin is often forced on them by getting caught or by embarrassing circumstances. But there's no change of mind, no new action, no new motivation.

Donald Grey Barnhouse told of a Sunday School teacher who once asked a class what was meant by the word "repentance." A little boy put up his hand and said, "It is being sorry for your sins." A little girl also raised her hand and said, "It is being sorry enough to quit."

In many circles the study of God's Word has fallen upon hard times. Some like to share, fellowship, eat, and even sing together but when it comes to good ole' Bible study, many are not interested.

These misinformed people do not realize "the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul" (Ps. 19:7). If we are to have revival and repentance among our people, a key starting place is the study of God's Word.

Ezra stood before the Jewish people and read from the Law from daybreak until noon (8:3). As he read from the Law, he also made it clear and gave the meaning "so that people could understand what was being read" (8:8). You might think the people were bored by this long Bible study but the opposite was true. The people lifted their hands and said, "Amen! Amen!" "Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground" (8:6).

It is amazing what happens when God's Word is taught and understood. The Jewish people responded to God's Word by confessing and repenting of their sins. They mourned the fact of their ungodliness by fasting, wearing sackcloth, and having dust on their heads (9:1). They stood and spent a quarter of the day in confession of their sins and worshiping God (9:2-3).

This repentance did not stop with just a "sorry" for their sins. It led them to commit to renewing the covenant with God. This renewal was not just a private commitment made in one's heart. It was put into writing and the leaders even affixed their seal to it (9:38). In Chapter 10, there is a list of all the ones who sealed it.

It has been said that biblical repentance reestablishes credibility with the world and fellowship with the Lord. The seven "whats" of 2 Corinthians 7:11 are seven marks of godly sorrow:

- Earnestness to do right;
- Eagerness to clear oneself through apology;
- Indignation against sin;
- Fear of God;
- Intense desire to see right accomplished;
- Zeal to correct what's wrong;
- Readiness to see that wrongdoing be dealt with.

For Christians, repentance is an attitude of life. Daily we ask God's Spirit to show us our sin. Then we work on overcoming it. May the ingredient of "godly sorrow" never be missing from our lives!

McDonald is pastor of Castlewoods Church, Brandon.

Life and Work Job: Profile in integrity



By Bob Rogers
Job 1-2, 6, 27

Have you ever given a store clerk cash for a purchase and he or she gave you too much change? What did you do? Many people would think nothing of keeping an extra quarter, but by doing so they are selling their integrity for 25 cents.

Job was a man of God who would not give up his integrity at any price. Chapters 1 and 2 of the book of Job tell the story of how Satan appeared before God and challenged the integrity of Job.

The Hebrew word *satan* means "adversary" or "accuser." The accuser came before the Lord, but the Lord was the one who brought up Job as an example of someone he could not accuse: "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil" (1:8).

Job 1:8 defines the integrity of Job with four specific terms:

1) Blameless. The Hebrew word means complete, thus giving the idea of a well-rounded, wholesome, and morally innocent person.

2) Upright. A word often used in parallel with blameless (Ps. 25:31; 37:37; Prov. 29:10), it means a straightforward person, loyal to his agreements and without moral deviation.

3) Fears God. "Fear" refers to a sense of awe more than a sense of terror of God. While others were flippant and casual toward God, Job was reverent.

4) Shuns evil. The natural result of turning toward God in reverence is to turn away from what is ungodly (Prov. 16:6).

Satan challenged Job's integrity by saying that he was good because God blessed him. "But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face" (1:11).

God called Satan's bluff and allowed him to test Job twice (1:13-2:10), but both times Job did not sin by cursing God (1:22; 2:10), not even at the urging of his wife: "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" (2:9). Instead, Job uttered those famous words: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised" (1:21).

It is difficult for us to understand why God would allow an innocent person such as Job to suffer. The book of Job does not answer this dilemma, but it gives us some helpful principles.

God himself is not the one who sends suffering upon us, but he does allow Satan to work. Many Christian philosophers feel this is because there would be no real meaning to human freedom if Satan had no influence or ability to tempt us to sin. The speeches of the Lord in Job 38-41 teach that this question is too great for us to understand because God is far greater than we are.

However, we do know that Satan is kept within limitations (1:12; 2:6), that God is able to bring good out of bad (Romans 8:28), that our troubles produce character (Romans 5:3-4; James 1:2-4), and that God should be glorified through our suffering (John 9:3).

Through it all, God said that Job "still maintains his integrity" (2:3). Job was then forced to defend his integrity against three so-called "friends" who took the false position that Job suffered because of his sin. In Job 6:29, Job called on his friends to cease their accusations: "Relent, do not be unjust; reconsider, for my integrity is at stake."

In Job 27:5 Job again defended himself, telling them: "I will never admit you are in the right; till I die, I will not deny my integrity."

Don't let someone tell you that you are being "too touchy" when you defend your integrity against false accusers. Your integrity is worth maintaining and defending. Job did, and he was vindicated in the end (42:7).

Questions to consider:

If you were a judge, would you excuse your best friend from a DUI charge? Would you commit adultery for a million dollars? Would you lie to get your child out of trouble? If everybody in your class had a stolen copy of the upcoming test, would you refrain from studying it?

What price do you put on your integrity?

Rogers is pastor of First Church, Poplarville.

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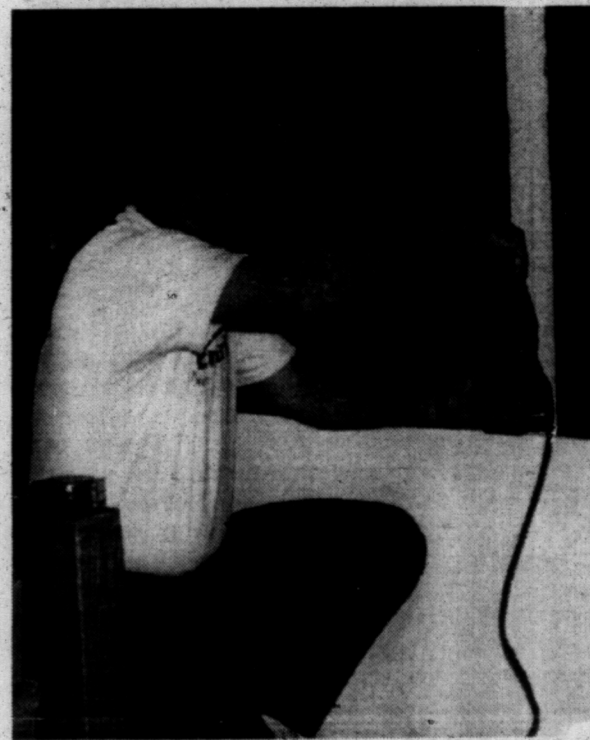
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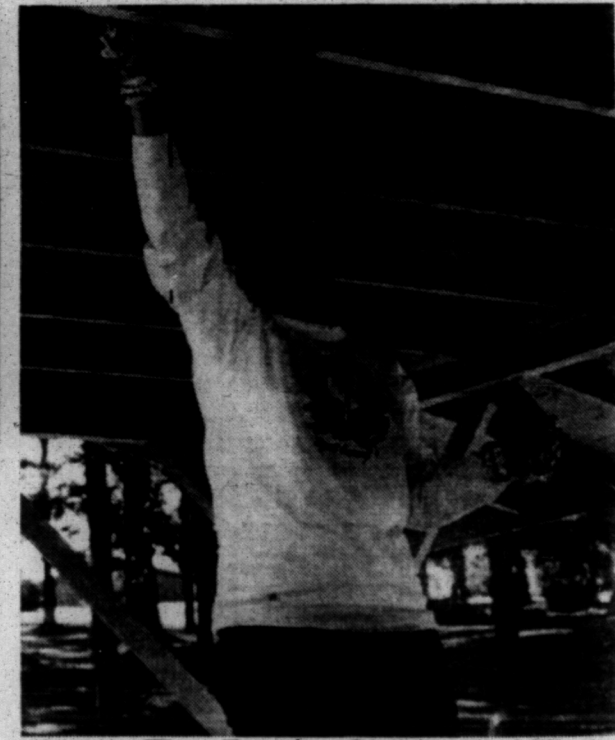
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Volunteers gave three days of service to The Baptist Children's Village during Corporate Community Service Week. Members from several corporations in the metropolitan area participate in this annual event. The Baptist Children's Village was glad to get the help renovating cottages and painting our pavilion.





Ministers' Wives Conference

A total of 75 women gathered at First Church, Jackson, on Oct. 30 prior to the start of the Mississippi Baptist Convention for the 1995 Ministers' Wives Conference. Featured speaker Dottie Hudson (above, right), associate counseling/family minister at First Church, Jackson, talks with Angela Gray, whose husband Travis pastors Sabougla Church, Calhoun Association. Betty Dobbs (below, right), wife of Gene Dobbs, administrative assistant for ministry at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, visits with Tina Cooper (left) and Missy Farris. Cooper's husband Philip pastors Pine Grove Church in Dumas. Farris' husband Doug pastors New Salem Church in Iuka. (Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.)



Bibliocipher

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JW EBHR, EH BSZWBH HXROWH, EVW GDSBX
DM E HMSVSXDEB ARDHW, EO ARBJ
MVSWHXARRT, XR RNNWV DM HMSVSXDEB
HEIVSNSIWH, EIIWMXEGBW XR KRT GJ
QWHDH IAVSHX.

NSVHX MWXWV XPR: NSZW

This week's clue: V equals R.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Six; Forty-Four.

Missouri messengers debate Cooperative Program, Bible

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — Messengers to the 1995 Missouri Convention annual meeting elected Doyle Sager president of the MBC over Jeff Barnes, then made Barnes their choice for first vice president.

In business sessions characterized by intense debate and close votes, messengers opted to retain current Cooperative Program allocation percentages, membership requirements, and convention display policies. The motion was offered by Robert L. Reading, a member of Second Church, Liberty.

The current percentages are 58.25% for Missouri causes; 37.75% for SBC causes; and 6% for joint causes.

Reading's motion received 384 yes votes, or 50.46%, and 377 no votes, 49.54%. His motion was one of two on the subject, taking opposite positions.

The second motion, made by Rick Auxier, co-pastor of Canaan Church, St. Louis, proposed the MBC executive board's administrative committee recommend an increase in the SBC's percentage allocation for the years 1997 through 2000. Auxier withdrew his

motion following the announcement of the vote on Reading's motion, stating he was doing so "in the interest of harmony in this convention."

Speaking for his motion prior to the vote, Reading pointed out the already-approved increase in this year's state budget goal from \$15.2 million to \$15.3 million increases the dollar amount going to the SBC by \$35,000, provided that the goal is met.

Speaking against the motion, Paul Callahan, pastor of First Church, Warrensburg, called messengers' attention to the CP giving record of Reading's church.

"He is a member of a church that has elected to eliminate Cooperative Program support," Callahan said. "They gave last year \$775, according to the annual, to cover their staff's annuity participation."

Regarding the motion itself, Callahan said, "I think any negative message is not necessary at this time."

Messengers defeated in a raised-ballot vote a motion offered by Roger Moran, messenger from First Church, O'Fallon, "that the Missouri Convention rescind the exhibit privileges of

the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs."

W.B. Tichenor, a messenger from Memorial Church, Columbia, raised a point of order, questioning whether the motion to rescind the BJC's display privileges was in order, since the BJC had a contract with the convention and was paying for the display space. MBC President Paul Brooks ruled the motion was in order and recognized Tichenor to speak against it.

Tichenor asked messengers, "Are we as Baptists who have championed the cause of religious liberty so frightened of this institution... that we wish to banish it from simply having a booth and allowing you as an individual messenger to walk by and not pick up anything or to stop and take that information? That's what this is really all about — people who are... fearful of hearing the truth, people who want to keep you from the opportunity to accept or reject what the Baptist Joint Committee offers."

Bill Miller, pastor of First Church, Farmington, and Gary Parker, pastor of First Church, Jefferson City, commented if contributing to the CBF constitutes dual alignment, then perhaps the same stance should be taken with respect to para-church organizations such as Focus on the Family, AWANA, Wycliffe Translators, Campus Crusade for Christ, or the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

"They all compete with what we are trying to do as Missouri Baptists and Southern Baptists," Miller said.

"If the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is of men, it will fail," Miller told messengers. "If it is of God, we ought not to stand in the way of it. We are independent Baptist churches in this convention, and we don't need and we don't want any further instruction from the convention about what we do and what we support."

"Don't sweat it. Cooperative Program receipts are up."



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

I grew up in many cultures as my parents moved around the world. I often get my Christian thoughts mixed up with other religions I've seen. How can I keep it all straight?

Satan is the author of confusion and would love to get you sidetracked in your Christian life. Romans 12:2 (NIV) encourages you to "...be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." — a continuing process that will occur as you keep your thoughts on things above and your eyes on Jesus. Successful ways to do this are:

- maintaining a daily quiet time that involves prayer and reading God's Word.

- faithfully attending church to keep in fellowship with other struggling travelers.

- locating a small group of like-minded Christians to whom you can be accountable when you think you are faltering.

These suggestions will provide feedback when you feel confused, and will serve as your "pit crew" to get you back in the race that is set before you. The final part of Romans 12:2 states, "Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his

good, pleasing and perfect will." Test your thoughts to understand God's will, and continually seek the truth. Keep up the good work!

I challenge you to show me in the Bible where it says I can't have an occasional beer or drop a quarter in a slot machine when I want to.

The Bible does not explicitly refer to your challenges, as you phrased them. Galatians 5:13 (NIV) states, "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love." Does such conduct on your part serve others in love? Study 1 Corinthians 8:9-13 and 10:31-33. Do your actions affect your Christian testimony to weaker brothers? Much confusion in our culture today is caused by the grayness of people — including Christians — who don't take a moral stand on such issues as you raise. Young people and new Christians need to see us going against the flow and taking a strong stand. Don't allow your freedom in Christ to become bondage to sin for you and others.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Baptist Record

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